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## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications – (401) 222-8471  
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### **R.I. NECAP Science scores rise at all grade levels Statewide proficiency rate improves for fourth straight year**

Student proficiency rates on the 2012 NECAP Science tests increased at all tested grade levels, according to results that the R.I. Department of Education released today (September 20, 2012).

All students in grades 4, 8, and 11 took the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) assessments in May.

Statewide, the proficiency rate improved this year by 3.1 percentage points, to 34.8 percent proficient, marking the fourth consecutive year of statewide improvement since the beginning of the NECAP Science assessments in 2008. Statewide, the proficiency level has improved by 11 percentage points since 2008.

Among tested elementary-school students (grade 4), 45.5 percent attained proficiency, an increase since last year of 1.8 percentage points. Among tested middle-school students (grade 8), 26.9 percent attained proficiency, an increase of 1.5 points. Among tested high-school students (grade 11), 32 percent attained proficiency, an improvement of 6.3 points.

“We all are aware that our students need a solid background in science in order to succeed in college and in the challenging careers in the Rhode Island economy of the future,” said Governor Lincoln D. Chafee. “I am very pleased by the steady improvement in our statewide science scores, especially at the high-school level. Congratulations to our science teachers and to our students!”

“Rhode Island educators are committed to preparing our students with the knowledge and skills they will need in literacy, mathematics, and science,” said George D. Caruolo, Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “We have a long way to go to attain the high statewide proficiency levels that we would like to see, but the test results we released today show that we are on the right course toward preparing all students for success.”

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Aside from the statewide improvements, the results released today also show that achievement gaps that separate many groups of students have generally widened. The gaps between black and white students, between Hispanic and white students, between English Learners and non-English learners, and between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students widened at all grade levels. The gaps between students with disabilities and students without disabilities widened in grades 8 and 11 and stayed essentially the same in grade 4.

“Although I am pleased by the statewide improvements on the 2012 NECAP Science assessments, the persistent achievement gaps across all grade levels remain a significant concern that we will work to address,” said David V. Abbott, Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Overall, however, I am pleased that Rhode Island science results continue to improve and that we are approaching 50-percent proficiency in science among our elementary-school students.”

At the school level, four elementary schools made statistically significant improvements since 2011: Hampden Meadows School (Barrington), Hugh Cole School (Bristol Warren), Paul Cuffee Charter School, and William D’Abate Elementary School (Providence).

Five middle schools made statistically significant improvements since 2011: Kickemuit Middle School (Bristol Warren), Chariho Regional Middle School, Wickford Middle School (North Kingstown), Nathan Bishop Middle School (Providence), and Woonsocket Middle School.

Nine high schools made statistically significant improvements since 2011: Barrington High School, East Providence High School, Lincoln Senior High School, Narragansett High School, Rogers High School (Newport), North Kingstown Senior High School, North Smithfield High School, Classical High School (Providence), and William M. Davies Jr. Career-Technical High School.

The NECAP science assessments were developed in partnership and adopted by the Departments of Education in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont. The three NECAP states have administered the assessment annually since 2008. The NECAP science assessments consist of multiple-choice, constructed-response, and inquiry task items on earth and space science, physical science, and life sciences.

A complete report on the 2012 NECAP science scores is posted on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/Results.aspx>

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